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THOMAS NAIL 2019-11-20

WHAT IS NEW MATERIALISM?

PHILOFICTION KAREN BARAD, MATTER, NEGATIVE MATERIALISM, NEW MATERIALISM, PERFORMATIVE MATERIALIM, PROCESS, RELATION, VITAL MATERIALISM

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This paper argues that there is currently no single definition of new materialism but at least three distinct and partly incompatible trajectories. All three of these trajectories share at least one common theoretical commitment: to problematize the anthropocentric and constructivist orientations of most twentieth-century theory in a way that encourages closer attention to the sciences by the humanities.

This paper emerges from our desire to offer a response to criticisms but not in order to defend new materialism in general. Instead, we hope to help redirect each arrow of critique toward its proper target, and on this basis to advocate for the approach we call "performative" or "pedetic" new materialism.

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